

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 1-12 are in the application.

As suggested by the Examiner, the specification has now been amended to include appropriate headings. A retyped specification containing the same text as the original specification, but now having numbered paragraphs, and claims as amended in the preliminary amendment, is submitted herewith to provide a reference for the amendments made herein. A page of amended abstract is also submitted herewith.

In the last office action objection was made to claim 7 as containing a grammatical error. Claim 7 has been corrected by reinserting the word "one" which was inadvertently deleted in a preliminary amendment.

Objection was also made to claims 8-12 as being unclear. Claims 8-12 have now been amended to include "means" for performing the previously recited functions, and are now believed to be clear.

Claim 2 has been held allowable but for its dependence on a rejected base claim. Claims 1 and 3-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,280,430 to Neftel et al.

Claim 1, the only independent claim in the application, has been amended to distinguish from the cited art.

Claim 1 now recites:

. . . the male socket being provided with external lateral lugs, the female socket being provided with a set of external notches. . .

and

. . . said collar comprising zones such that a radial thrust on these zones causes deformation of the collar thus separating the notches of the collar from the notches of the female socket in order to allow separation of the collar and the female socket. . . .

Support for the foregoing amendments to claim 1 is found in the specification at paragraphs 0011 and 0017, respectively.

The invention as now claimed is neither anticipated nor even remotely suggested by Neftel et al.

Neftel discloses a guide part (42) having one end (46) to be secured with a flask (10) and having an opposite end to be secured to a syringe (44). The guide part is not intended to connect two luer cones.

Neftel's guide part is provided with external (not internal) resilient tongues (58) to secure the end (46) to the flask by cooperation of the tongues with the bottom face (24) of the flange (18) of the flask (col. 3, line 65 to col. 4, line 16). The tongues are resilient in order that the guide part can be automatically secured to the neck of the flask merely by pushing the neck of the flask into the end of the guide part (col. 4, lines 24 - 29).

In the instant application, there is no external tongue. Instead, internal notches are provided on the locking collar for cooperating with external notches on the female socket.

Neftel et al. state that the syringe (44) may be extracted from the guide part (42) (col. 5, lines 51 - 55), but there is no suggestion that the flask can be separated from the guide.

Moreover, in Neftel, there is no indication that the guide part should be adapted to be pushed radially to separate the tongues from the flask, nor is there any description of means for effecting the separation.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1, as now amended, is patentable over Neftel et al.

The prior art cited but not applied in the rejection is believed to be inapposite to the claims.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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